Study Abroad & the Pre-Professional Student

Spending part of your undergraduate education studying in another country is a wonderful way of seeing the world, becoming independent, and being a global citizen. You may not have many opportunities in life to live in another country for an extended period and to immerse yourself in another language and culture. Besides all the benefits to you, studying abroad looks good on your resumé. Study abroad shows professional schools that you are adaptable, willing to get outside your comfort zone, and ready to take on new challenges. You may also be able to set up a shadowing or internship experience with a professional in your chosen field in the country in which you are studying. This kind of opportunity can be a truly enlightening part of the study abroad experience. ***http://www.studyabroad.purdue.edu/***

Is it possible to fit in all the pre-professional school prerequisite courses and study abroad?

It can be difficult and to some extent it depends on your major and the pre-professional field you hope to enter. With some advanced planning, however, you should be able to fit it in. You may also need to prioritize some of your educational plans. If you intend to be a biomedical engineering and Spanish double major with a minor in chemistry, pre-medicine courses, and study abroad….well, you might need to drop one or two of those to make everything fit. The important thing is to plan ahead. Mention your desire to study abroad early while working with your academic advisor to see how to make it work. It may also require some summer coursework.

What programs are available?

You can find programs all over the world. You need to do your homework and learn as much about the programs as possible. There are several programs that cater to pre-professional students. The Study Abroad Office at Purdue can help you find the best program for you.

When should I go off campus?

The timing of your off-campus study often depends on what career field you are planning to enter. Typically students go off campus during their junior year. If your field requires a number of year-long sequences of courses, it might be difficult to fit this in. First semester senior year may also be an option, but for some fields it can delay your professional school interviews. You should discuss the timing of off-campus study with your academic advisor and the Center for Pre-Professional Advising.

Other considerations?

Part of determining the timing of off-campus study should include planning for the impending application expenses. Study abroad will require additional funds beyond what you pay to be a student at Purdue because you will want to travel. Your application to pre-professional programs may cost you $1,000-2,000 (probably up to $1,000 for law & allied health programs) depending on the number of applications you submit and the distance you must travel for interviews. Working out the financing of both study abroad and professional school applications should be part of your plan.